

**OFFICE PSYCHIATRY**—The Management of the Emotionally and Mentally Disturbed Patient. Louis G. Moench, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine and of Psychiatry, University of Utah School of Medicine. The Year Book Publishers, Inc., 200 East Illinois Street, Chicago, 1952. 310 pages, \$6.00.

*Office Psychiatry* by Dr. L. G. Moench, is an interesting book which deals with every phase of psychiatry from the psychosexual development of the child, problems in psychosomatic medicine and analysis to psychosurgery, all in 300 pages, and is limited as a result in explanation and clarity. It is a book of facts and near facts and due to the paucity of content, some of these are barely supported. Actually, little of the book pertains to the problems of office psychiatry; the book has almost nothing to contribute which would be helpful in managing patients.

Although it is quite obvious that the author, through his illustrations—and these are gems—has given evidence of his sympathy and of his understanding of the problems of mentally ill patients, he does not explain how to treat them, and one looks for this particularly in his chapter on "Psychotherapy."

Although many of his statements are factual, some sound dogmatic and rigid and many readers of the so-called "non-oriented" variety may take exceptions to his statements, particularly those found in the chapters on psychosomatic illnesses and their etiology. On the other hand, even psychiatrists of the so-called well oriented variety may feel justified in taking exception to such statements as are found in reference to treatment of choice in psychotics.

In short, the book is a quick look into the field of psychiatry and in reviewing the book, one recalls the quotation the author uses, "Brevity is best if it pursues the therapist rather than the therapist pursuing brevity."

The book should be excellent as one used for introducing psychiatry and its scope such as in introductory courses in schools, and perhaps, with a change in title, for laity.

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**DANGER SIGNALS**—Warnings of Serious Diseases. Walter C. Alvarez, M.D., Consultant in Medicine, Emeritus, Mayo Clinic. Wilcox & Follett Company, Chicago, 1953. 176 pages, \$3.00.

Dr. Alvarez states that he is writing this book to save foolish worriers from needless anxiety and wise persons from avoidable illness and death. This is a lofty purpose. How practical it is in this case is open to question. Such a book must, inevitably, give a little knowledge to many people, and the old saw about a little knowledge being a dangerous thing is most true in the field of medicine. Dr. Alvarez's book is certain to send a number of its readers scurrying to their doctors, to arouse anxiety—without relief—in a number of others and to leave still others with a false sense of security.

The book is written in simple, fluent and highly personal style. It is organized in a logical manner, with a partial listing of the principal symptoms of many major and minor diseases. While it touches on a myriad of conditions, it digs deeply into none. It also dabbles in treatment and prognosis as well as diagnosis. All this makes for a very readable, if dangerously abbreviated, text of medicine.

Possibly the best chapter in the book is the last one—on how to choose a good doctor. While it does not cover all the ways, it does a reasonably satisfactory job.

The principal use of this book should be for the intelligent patient *with* a doctor, the patient who can analyze for himself *until* he gets medical care. This is the rare patient and, unfortunately, the book is far more likely to be seized upon by the apprehensive or the merely curious. The reviewer hopes, along with Dr. Alvarez, that it will relieve more anxiety than it causes—but he doubts it.

**THE ESSENTIALS OF MEDICAL DIAGNOSIS**—A Manual for Students and Practitioners. Rt. Hon. Lord Horder, G.C.V.O., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond.), Extra Physician to H.M. the Queen; and A. E. Gow, M.D., F.R.C.P. (Lond.), Honorary Physician to Household, H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent. Second Edition Revised with the Assistance of Ronald Bodley Scott, M.A., D.M. (Oxon.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), Physician to H.M. Household. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1953. 462 pages, 6 color and 17 black and white plates, 22 figures and 5 charts, \$6.00.

This book is remarkable in that the second edition appears some 25 years after the first. Despite this time lapse the main purpose of the book has not changed: it is to show the student how to start with a minimum of clues and, by the pursuit of proper methods, to construct a diagnosis. The authors have tried consistently to work from the patient and his complaint toward the disease from which he suffers, and not in the opposite direction. This system requires the observation of comparatively few salient signs, which must arouse in the observer the question for specific associated signs and symptoms.

The book attempts to cover the whole field of medical diagnosis in 428 pages. It contains considerable information, is well printed, and is liberally supplied with good illustrations. It is necessarily incomplete, mentioning many physical signs and mechanical aids in passing and leaving more adequate and detailed descriptions for other books.

It can be recommended only for students' reference or as a review text for the graduate with an examination to take. Incidentally, it demonstrates again that the method of teaching in English medical schools is different enough from that in ours so that, on the whole, English texts cannot substitute as primary teaching textbooks in American schools.

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**PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE**—A Textbook for Students and Doctors. L. S. P. Davidson, B.A. Cantab., M.D., F.R.C.P. (Edin.), F.R.C.P. (Lond.), M.D. (Oslo), Physician to H.M. the Queen in Scotland, Professor of Medicine and Clinical Medicine, University of Edinburgh. The Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1952. 919 pages, \$6.75.

This new textbook of medicine is written entirely by the staff of the Department of Medicine of the University of Edinburgh. In effect, it represents the course in clinical medicine given at that medical school.

Each section of the book starts with a discussion of the anatomy and physiology of the systems concerned and ends with a review of the measures available for the prevention of disease. There is no orthodox chapter on the infectious diseases, although 28 pages are included in a general chapter entitled "Infection and Disease." There are no chapters devoted to pediatrics or psychiatry. There is no attempt to describe all of the rare diseases or syndromes. The chapter on tropical diseases is abbreviated.

The principal use of this book is for students of the University of Edinburgh and possibly other Scottish universities. It is too incomplete and regional to be used by American doctors or students.

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**BEDSIDE DIAGNOSIS**—2nd Edition. Charles Seward, M.D., F.R.C.P. (Edin.), Honorary Physician, Royal Devon and Exeter Hospitals; Consulting Physician, Princess Elizabeth Orthopedic Hospital. Williams and Wilkins Company, Baltimore, distributor for E. & S. Livingston, Ltd., London, 1952. 380 pages, \$3.50.

The first edition of this book was reviewed in *CALIFORNIA MEDICINE* 73:208, August 1950.

There has not been sufficient change in the second edition to warrant another review.